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# Thank God for Aging

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whenever you are admitted to a hospital. You have the right to give informed consent for or to refuse consent for any medical treatment as long as you are a competent adult. You have the right to be fully informed about the risks and benefits of proposed treatments. You have the right to seek a second medical opinion at any time.

Hospice and palliative care centers are a wonderful option for patients with life-threatening illnesses. If it is your choice to stop (or not start) certain medical treatments, a Hospice or palliative care center will help you focus on doing everything possible to remain comfortable, pain free, and with those you most love. **T**

*Dr. Susan Salladay is a registered nurse, a professor of nursing at Cedarville University, and an associate for clinical ethics in the University's Center for Bioethics. Before coming to Cedarville in 2005, she used her talents as a hospital administrator, bioethics center director, educator, and a nurse. Salladay is a columnist for two nursing journals and has authored numerous articles and books. She holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Boston College with a specialization in applied and clinical healthcare ethics.*



## Thank God for Aging

by Chuck Dolph, Ph.D.

**W**EEK after week in our Sunday school class, my friend prays that his mother will die. It always makes me feel so sad. I understand why he prays for her death. She is very old, very ill, and unresponsive in a nursing home. Even though I understand, I fear my friend may be forgetting God's design for our lives.

The Bible makes it clear that long life is a blessing from God. When I tell this to my Baby Boomer peers, many of whom care for aging parents, they usually look at me wryly and say, "Sometimes it is." I know what they mean.

We must not forget that there is always meaning and purpose, even in aging and illness. Aging strips us. If we live long enough, we will lose our beauty, our strength, our wealth, our independence, the control of our bodily functions, our pride, and perhaps our very self. These are our idols, all the things that we trust in life to make us attractive, valuable, and self-sufficient.



If our aging is successful, we will end our lives stripped of everything but God, totally naked and helpless, utterly dependent on Him and the love of others. Everything that we trusted in life for our worth will have been stripped away. What a blessing to finally find our right relationship to God! Thank God for aging.

*Dr. Chuck Dolph is a licensed psychologist and serves as professor of psychology at Cedarville University.*